



By JERRY GREENE

Washington, Aug. 7.—An age-old quarrel, always saturated with bitterness, has been rolling along at a gathering pace in the capital during recent weeks. Today as perhaps never before, it cries for settlement. This dispute concerns the right of a professional military man to express his opinion on any subject of more general interest than the caliber of a rifle.

With President Kennedy warning the nation that the Communist troubles will be of long duration, and with every indication that the current expansion of the armed forces will see a good many more citizens crammed into uniform for an extended period, the issue of the military man's thought, knowledge, guidance and education on world affairs becomes of overriding importance.

The rift has been brought to the seething point in the Senate, and the disturbances will enlarge. The top character on one side is Sen. J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.), chairman of the



Sen. Fulbright, Adm. Burke and Sen. Thurmond.

Foreign Relations Committee. His leading opponent is Sen. J. Strom Thurmond (D-S.C.), who doesn't share the seeming idea that a man loses his integrity and intelligence when he dons a uniform.

Fulbright has had Senate backing from Sen. Joseph Clark (D-Pa.); Thurmond's support has come from Sens. Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.), Styles Bridges (R-N.H.) and Earl Mundt (R-S.D.), among others.

Fulbright, a scholar, spent a year as a law clerk for the Justice Department. He taught law several years, then a stint as president of the University of Arkansas, then was in the House and Senate. Thurmond, also a lawyer, was a general in the Army Reserve. That was his only military service, but he has five battle stars and 16 decorations.

One day Fulbright cranked off a memo entitled "Proposed Activities of Military Personnel at the Public" and sent it off to Defense Secretary Robert McNamara. Thurmond objected to it and put it in the Congressional Record, saying as he did so: "The implication of this document goes far beyond a mere attack on our military leaders; it constitutes a clandestine assault on the fundamental foundations of our republic."

Some Senatorial Shout Is Expressed

On the same day, Fulbright took the floor to say the memo was "personally, not that of the Foreign Relations Committee. He said it was 'based on my strong belief in the principle of military subordination to civilian control.'"

Goldwater, on that day, and Bridges and others later expressed shock at the particular paragraph in the Fulbright document, which read: "There is little in the education, training or experience of military officers to equip them with the balance of judgment necessary to put their own ultimate solutions—those with which their education, training and experience are concerned—into proper perspective in the President's total strategy for the nuclear age."

Now for sheer intellectual arrogance, that finding from the Arkansas Ozarks ranks near an alltime high. If he seeks pure scholarship as a gauge of wisdom and capability, Fulbright might try for size just a couple of recent members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor and Air Force Gen. Thomas White, masters of seven or eight foreign languages each.

This, together with the experience gained in fighting a global war, just might enable these two generals to challenge the Senator's competency as foreign relations chairman.

Lean on the Right, Fulbright Complains

In his memo for McNamara, Fulbright repeatedly brought up the subject of military leaders leaning upon "extremely radical right wing speakers" for guidance.

He called for a reconsideration "from the standpoint of a basic error"—lack of judgment on the part of the military—of a 1958 National Security Council directive making it policy to use the armed forces "to arouse the public to the menace of the cold war."

The Arkansan made much of those "radical right wing" adherents, with only the scantiest mention of the left wing lunacy which clamors incessantly for protection of the Fifth Amendment when questioned.

The nation has carefully selected prime youths for its service academies; it gets thousands of other potential military leaders from civilian colleges and universities. Few civilians have to study as hard or as long, for the armed forces require incessant, lifetime bookwork from those who reach the top. And the percentage of jug-heads in the military—who also pay taxes—is no greater than in private industry or even Congress.

But these military chiefs, by the time they have reached that level, have spent many years digging into global affairs, and they theoretically, at least, are still American citizens.

Burke Strikes an Even Balance

Adm. Arleigh Burke, just retired a chief of naval operations, was asked about these matters and the Fulbright fuss in particular when he appeared as a private citizen for a National Press Club speech. He put a finger on the heart of the issue: "The question is," he said, "who is to determine what is harmful to the government?"

Military men, he said, should be "neither right, nor left." But the nation's security is in their life's work and fundamentally, Burke held, security depends on what's in the hearts of the citizens—their understanding of freedom and willingness to fight for it.